THE UGLY
AND ITS PLACE IN ART AND LITERATURE

A Thesis Presented for the
Degree of Master of Arts

BY
LESTER HENDREN STIMMEL  B.A.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

APPROVED BY

[Signature]

AUGUST 1938
ARISTOTE:

Poetics – Translated by S. H. Butcher.
Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art – S. H. Butcher

PLOTINOS:

Works of Plotinus, in Four Volumes,
Translated by K. S. Guthrie
Philosophy of Plotinus – W. R. Inge
History of Philosophy – Windelband

BURKE:

The Sublime and Beautiful – Complete Works of Edmund Burke – Volume 1

LESSING:

Lockoon – Lessing's Prose Works, Translated by E.C. Reaslay and Helen Zimmerman

KANT:

Kant's Critique of Judgment – Translated by J.C. Meredith, With seven essays by the translator

HEGEL:

Hegel's Philosophy of Fine Art, in Four Volumes,
Translated by F.B.A. Ormiston

RUSKIN:

Seven Lamps of Architecture
Modern Painters (Selections)

324444
CROCE:

Aesthetic—Translated by Douglas Ainslee

The Philosophy of Croce—H. W. Carr

SANTAYANA:

The Sense of Beauty

COLERIDGE:

The Evolution of English Criticism

by Laura Johnson Wylie

BOSANQUET:

History of Aesthetic

MODERN VIEWPOINT:

Studies in recent Aesthetic—Katherine Gilbert

Theory of Beauty—E.F. Carritt

GENERAL:

( Discussions of all Writers )

Bosanquet and Carritt—See Above
PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to give a comprehensive survey of the development of critical theory, in the light of its treatment of the problem of the ugly and its place in art and literature. In order to present this survey as clearly as possible, it seems advisable to treat it historically, with special discussions of each of those critics whose theory is of exceptional importance, and a general summary and discussion, in which the whole matter is concisely treated and the fundamental facts are re-emphasized. It has also seemed best to treat each critic according to a uniform outline, to which nearly all lend themselves nicely. The advantage of this plan is that it facilitates reference to any theory of any philosopher. The outline followed divides the treatment of each major writer into six sections: first, a general introduction; second, a review of his theory of beauty; third, his view of ugliness; fourth, his principles of art; fifth, the place of the ugly in art, (using the term to cover all phases of creative work of aesthetic appeal); and sixth, a series of general remarks. The second, third, fourth and fifth sections are arranged logically, each following naturally from those before it.

The reason for the place in the discussion of each critic may be seen from the remarks, and from the general summary.

(1) Croce is an exception, since such a treatment of him would reverse the logical order.
Occasional cross reference will be found in the foot notes.

I wish to signify my obligation to Prof. J.V. Denny of the Dept. of English of Ohio State University, and to Prof. E.L. Beck of the same department, for their suggestions and assistance in the preparation of this paper.

Of the books mentioned in the bibliography, a special debt is owed to Bernard Bosanquet's "History of Aesthetic," for the helpful discussions of a few critics, and for suggestions regarding the outstanding historical developments which give unity to our survey.
INTRODUCTION

In a survey of the development of the theory of ugliness, there are three major points to be watched with some care. These three are the phases of the problem which, together, constitute the entire development; and the stage at which any one of them rests is a fair criterion of that of the whole development. These three are: first, the definitions of ugliness, and the extent to which it is considered absolute; second, the guiding principle of art, which varies with each important critic, yet shows a marked trend away from anything iron-clad; third, a corollary to the second, and depending also upon the first, the place of the ugly in art.

This is the central problem of the paper. It was first stated by Plutarch (who, however, did nothing to solve it). "Can what is ugly in itself be beautiful in art? If so, can it be true to the original? And, if it is either untrue to the original, or ugly in itself, how can we admire it?" It is this clever dilemma that we shall try to solve. Each of these three shows a tendency to broaden, as will be seen in the discussion and the summary.

Because both follow the same general principles, and they are treated together by the philosophers whom we are reviewing, no effort has been made to treat literature separately from the other types of art. It will be seen from the discussions that the rules made to apply to one apply also to the other, that the examples used are drawn at random from both, and that any special treatment required is given
by the critics, as Lessing and Hegel for example give it. The essential difference is simply this, that poetry, which is usually the only phase of literature treated, depends upon a series of pictures, in which the ugly may reside, while "static" arts depend upon only one.

One interesting phase of this difference is that it is usually difficult to determine just what part of poetry is ugly. The moralists, Plotinus, Kant, and Ruskin, include wickedness in the scope of the ugly. Most of the others, however, are careful to distinguish between the beautiful and the good, and carry the distinction to their opposites, the ugly and the evil. On the other hand, it is generally agreed that the ugly includes the distorted, the repulsive, the false, or deceptive; and in such a category we can place, if not wickedness, at least moral depravity; and this applies in most instances.

It will also be noted that when we speak of the ugly, the definition given above will usually cover what we mean. Thus when we speak of the ugly in art, we mean, not the ugliness of bad art, but what we are accustomed to calling ugly; and it is the place of this type of ugliness in art that in each case we wish to determine.

While there are some questions which have an indirect bearing upon the problem of the ugly in art, which is our chief concern, the many side-issues and suggestions of questions which are possible are avoided, in order that clarity, unity and control over the problem may be preserved wherever possible.
The examples of ugliness are limited to the number required to make the various positions clear, and up to the summary are usually taken from among those used by the critic under discussion.
At the beginning of the history of aesthetic, as of almost all intellectual developments, we find the two great Greeks, Plato and Aristotle. The former, however, is not of sufficient importance to our study to warrant separate treatment, though he did make some contributions, which we shall discuss in their proper places. Plato has disposed of art with a wave of the hand; it is pleasant enough, but should never be allowed to interfere with moral duty. Consequently his theory becomes anti-aesthetic rather than aesthetic; and it is not carried out far enough to earn the name of a philosophy of art.

Aristotle, however, in the "Poetics" has developed a scheme of art which requires some elaboration; and which, moreover, is so excellently simple and clear that it may be used as a sort of guide throughout the entire discussion. If we understand how the different theorists drew away from Aristotle, and to what extent, we can understand their theories fairly well.

In order, however, to appreciate his place in the discussion of the aesthetic principle, we must first find his viewpoint.

Aristotle, in this field, is not primarily a philosopher; he is not dealing with abstract concepts. He is rather an observer; he bases his principles, not so much on the ideal art, as upon what seems to him the best of the art he finds around him.
This is significant for three reasons. In the first place, he judges on the basis of refined classical art; particularly the tragedy; therefore his canons of art are the classical canons. In the second place, the classical artists were careful, in their best works, to avoid presenting the ugly on the stage, or in their art; as a result, the ugly is less a part of his problem than it has become since. In the third place, his judgments are without speculation on the principles of beauty, and therefore fails to consider many questions which the others consider important. In short, rather than judging the whole field of art, he judges what he sees at hand, on the basis of rules he drew from the best examples.

So, we are writing of what Aristotle observed, not of what he visualized as ideal. Strictly speaking, this scheme because of its limited scope, does not consider the question of beauty and ugliness; yet his theory of art is extremely important.

Following the plan previously outlined, we shall first discuss Aristotle on this subject:

What is Beauty?

As has been pointed out, Aristotle disregards the science of aesthetic; and with the omission comes failure to state the nature of the beautiful, or to describe it. The attempt has been made to build a definition of beauty from his works, but the material is purely fragmentary. Aristotle assumes that beauty is indispensable in a work of art, but only hints as to its nature. It is possible that the need of a definition never occurred to him. What we know of the problem is given
in the " Poetics " v114. Any beautiful object must have an orderly arrangement of parts and a certain magnitude. This plainly, is an analytical conclusion, with the typical "orderliness" of classical art as a part of it. Beyond this it is useless to try to go. Neither does it contribute much to the next question,

What is Ugliness?

" The problem of the ugly was neglected before Plotinus, who attempted to solve the difficult problem of its meaning. However, though as a problem in itself, Aristotle did not consider it, he describes the ugly in connection with its place in art. This description is summed up by Butler thus: "What provokes laughter is a certain ugliness, a defect, or deformity; the disproportionate, the symmetrical, the frailties, but not the vices of humanity." Again " The incongruities, absurdities, or cross purposes of life, its blunders and discords, its imperfect correspondences and adjustments, and that in things intellectual as well as moral." This, according to Butler is what Aristotle means when he mentions the ugly. Accepting it, we notice that it is the harmless incongruity which he here includes; the painful or destructive he banishes from the place of ugliness. The reason for this is what we see in his theory of the place of the ugly in art, its purpose is to cause laughter. Stated differently, the ugly is the ridiculous, the deformed, but not the painful. To quote Aristotle himself: " The ridiculous, which is a species of the ugly, may be defined as a mistake or a deformity, but not productive of harm to others; the mask ( of comedy ) for instance, that excited laughter, is something ugly and diatom
ed without causing pain."

It is unfortunate that he has not described the genus, of which he calls the ridiculous a species; but our knowledge of his theory of the ugly must stop here.

Theory of Art.

It is here that Aristotle is most important. His "Poetics" is an analysis of art, considering form, matter, and manner. From this we shall select what is most important for our purpose.

Poetry comes from two causes in human nature: first, the impulse of the maker to imitate, and on the part of the audience, pleasure in seeing things imitated; second, the desire to learn.

Thus art performs a double function; it pleases, and it instructs. Its end, however, is not the second, but the first. "The end of fine art is to give pleasure."

What is the nature of this pleasure? Aristotle himself defines it as a "movement by which the soul is brought into its normal state of being." What is natural, says Aristotle, is pleasant. Therefore, similar things or persons are pleasant to each other. Hence, also—and here is the crux of the whole theory—we take pleasure in seeing things well imitated. "We delight," says Aristotle, "to view the most realistic representation of things in art; the forms for example of the lowest animals and dead bodies." So the aim of the artist is to imitate well; the standard by which he is judged is the excellence of his imitation.

This principle of imitation, however, is not so iron-clad as it might seem. It does not permit the extreme interpreta-
tion to which it seems open. If accuracy of imitation of a physical object were all that is demanded, then the modern photograph would be the highest type of art. Aristotle is not blind to the personal element in creative art. His imitation does not mean, simply, line-for-line imitation of nature, or of a physical object. It means imitation of the contents of the artist's mind, whatever that may be. It is possible to carry this interpretation to the extreme of elasticity as the other to the extreme in its limitations. It is important here, however, only that it be understood as it was meant. The term was used before Aristotle; in fact, the dictum of imitation as the basis of art was suggested by Plato; but he left it at the point of suggestion, and Aristotle developed it and gave it the new meaning of imitation of the mind of men, of the inward processes of the inward acts of will and emotions; in short, "men in action, where action is equivalent to mental life." Butcher and Carritt join in suggesting that Aristotle meant the imitation of the universal when he said the imitation of the mind of men; this would put him in the general class of Hegel; but, since this is a debated subject, and out of place here, we will leave it as it stands.

Ugliness in Art.

Omitting any discussion of the "Katharsis," since it is not the end, but a by-product of art, we come finally to the question of the place of the ugly in art, as Aristotle sees it. That ugliness is acceptable is unquestionable; if it is well imitated, it is art, for art is nothing more nor less than imitation. But, being so, it must have a place, a function.
What this is has already been suggested. The ugly has a place in comedy, as the ludicrous, the laugh-provoking.

"What provokes laughter," he says "is a certain ugliness." This has already been defined as the "frailties," but not the vices of mankind." Thus does the ugly get into art and perform a definite function, as part of the comedy, an artistic piece. Butcher explains it." Evil regarded in its essential nature may be ugly; but shown in the action of a comedy to be nugatory and ridiculous, it ceases to be ugly; it is an element in a fact which is beautiful.

Avoiding the hair-splitting over words possible here, we see what the place of the ugly in art is to Aristotle. It is important to bear in mind that this is not a speculative judgment of ideal art, but a report on art as he saw it; and that it is possible that the reason that comedy is the only place for the ugly to be used legitimately, according to Aristotle, is that he never saw it used successfully in any other place. Had he read "Paradise Lost" he might have broadened his principle somewhat. We never know, however, that he does not apply the term "ugly" to tragedy. The ugly is not painful, at least that part of the ugly he described. Here we might introduce one of the questions that puzzles most; is it that evil, the tragic force, the element of destruction ugly? Or can it assume ugly form? By his silence, Aristotle seems to say "No"; and the general opinion seems to support him. But we cannot settle it, at least not at this stage; so we mention it, and keep it open.

The other point must be mentioned. We have been talking of the naturally ugly, if there is such a thing, as it fits
into art. It is out of our province to discuss ugliness of bad art, which eliminates itself from consideration, but which Croce insists upon dragging back into his scheme. But it must be kept in mind that Aristotle meant that this natural ugliness, and not poor imitation, is useful in comedy.

Remarks.

In order to build upon our scheme we must note carefully the contribution of each philosopher to it, and his answer to our problem. As for Aristotle, he must answer the question "Can the ugly have a place in art?" with an unqualified "Yes"; for if it is wellimitated it is art. And his contribution is his theory of imitation. "The poet must be the poet of his stones more than of his verses, since he is a poet by virtue of the imitative quality of his work. He must present only the probable." The first part of this we deny; the rest we can question, but not dissociate from Aristotle's name; all through the discussion we must associate "Aristotle" with "Imitation." This is his contribution, and it furnishes us the best anchor we have in the whole problem.

(1) While this statement is interesting, it is outside our province and must therefore be disregarded.

(2) Butcher
PLOTINOS

When we come to this philosopher, we see a doctrine which is a queer mixture of philosophical, religious, and aesthetic concepts. He is, of course, primarily a religious mystic; and this so colors his aesthetic that it becomes at once the most interesting and the least reliable of all those we are considering. More than this, he is hardly less a mystery than he is a mystic. His theory of beauty is involved and baffling; so much so that it is best to give only its outstanding features here. His place in our review is granted to him because of his unique position, one of the extreme positions in the history of aesthetic, and because of his having been the first of recognize the problem of the nature of ugliness. Like Aristotle, his theory is not complete, but leaves some questions unanswered. Yet he covers the first thoroughly.

What is Beauty?

What, asks Plotinus, are the causes of beauty, and are there more than one? When one reads his answer to his question, one reaches the conclusion that there may be hundreds. However, the high spots of his analysis are as follows.

Beauty, to Plotinus, is an objective thing; it is the highest of all things. In fact, God is Sovereign Beauty; all other things are but images of Him. It is evident, therefore that "bodies become beautiful by communion with a reason descending upon them from the Divine." (1) that wherein the beauty of an object consists comes from God; it is an "emanation" from Him.

(1) First Ennead Bk. 6 Para. 2
What is the nature of this "reason" which makes beautiful everything upon which it descends? Plotinus, to describe it, gives it the name "form". Form gives objects which it forms into a whole a unity, and when such a unity is achieved there is beauty. To understand the word as we use it is to begin to see its meaning; but it really means much more. It is somewhat analogous to Hegel's "Idea"; it is, as Windelband calls it the "idealesence" or the spiritual light;" it is "divine meaning," (Θεός ζώο). "Form is not a quality, but a reason." "Form is the dream of the Good." The form of a thing is its Good." "The form of a thing is its whymess."

From these various descriptions we may gradually come to know what we mean by the term. Form in short, is that combination of shape, color, and material which makes the object what it is, plus divine all-embracing reason in which the object becomes beautiful. "It is in the shining of ideal essence through its sensuous phenomena that beauty consists. By virtue of this streaming of the spiritual light into matter the entire world of the senses is beautiful, and likewise the individual thing, formed after its archetype." (7)

But practically everything has form, as we know it. Is everything, therefore, beautiful? Plotinus answers that it is not true that everything has form as he used the word. When forced to set up his standard, he very clearly defines it. "The element of beauty is something perceivable to the very glance, something which the soul recognizes as kindred, and sympathetic to her own nature, which she welcomes and assimilates.

(1) Hist. of Phil. Pg 246  (2) Sixth Ennead Bk. 7
(3) Windelband Pg 248
But as soon as she meets an ugly object, she recoils, repudiates it, and rejects it as something foreign, towards which her real nature feels antipathy." 

Thus we find a relationship established between the great intelligible beauty, of which earthly beauty is but a reflection, and the soul of the individual. This relationship he explains in this way. The soul contains within itself the understanding of form, the interior model, according to which it judges. This judgment it makes by reason of a specially ordered faculty, whose sole function it is to appreciate all that concerns beauty. In this, Plotinus anticipates Kant, (see section on Kant.)

So the beautiful means, simply that which the soul recognizes as kindred to itself; that which has in it the Supreme Good, or God, or Intelligence; that which has "form." It cannot be denied that this definition is clear, but it gives some indication of a mystic idea of beauty, while remaining as obscure as mysticism should be to non-mystics. It is also clear enough to let us understand something about our particular problem.

What is Ugliness?

"Being is beautiful," says Plotinus. "Pure matter is ugliness. Pure matter, that is, matter without form, the element which causes beauty. Again a cumulative definition will serve our purpose.

"When a shapeless object, by nature capable of receiving shape and intelligible form, remains completely without

(1) Ennead 1 BK. 6 Para? (2) Ibid, 3
reason or form, it is ugly."

"That which remains completely foreign to all divine reason is ugly."

"Any object should be considered ugly when it is not entirely molded by informing reason."

So the ugly and the beautiful are direct opposites. The beautiful has divine reason; the ugly is foreign to it; the beautiful has form, is "entirely molded by informing reason;" the ugly lacks this. This soul recognizes the beautiful as kindred; it recoils from the ugly.

While these definitions are not concrete, they are at the same time enlightening. We are permitted, also, to faintly see what, concretely, is ugly to Plotinos, and at the same time touch one of our interesting problems. To Plotinos, there is no ugliness like moral ugliness, wickedness, failure to touch and understand God. It is unsafe to go beyond this simple statement; yet we can see that we have here something by which to recognize Plotinos, and at the same time find a champion for one side of the controversy as to whether or not wickedness is really ugly.

It remains yet to describe their part of ugliness in Plotinos's scheme of appreciation. It is his view that by observing the ugly we come to seek and to recognize the beautiful; by viewing the wickedness we appreciate form. Ugliness, to him, is foreign accretion; body mingles with the soul, and becomes covered with evil, and an ugly soul results. We see this, recoil, and look again for the soul, but the soul free from this foreign matter, and restored to its unique nature. Were it not for the

(1) Ennead I Bk. 6  (3) Ibid  (2) Ibid
view of the ugly soul, we would never desire to see the beautiful one. The purpose it thus serves is somewhat similar to the use of ugliness in art as a "foil", to accentuate the beautiful. Yet is superior to it, in the importance of its task; for to Plotinos it is indispensable, whereas as a foil it is merely valuable.

What is Art?

Plotinos theory of art is also highly mystical; and as such it subordinates creative aims to religion. The highest duty or aim of any man is to come into touch with the spirit of God, and to unite the God within himself with the original from which it came. And this is the aim of the artist as well. The artist does not wish to create; he wishes by expressions of the form, the Intelligence, the God in himself, as it comes out in the work of art, to gain contact with God, a grasping of eternal beauty. The work of art is simply the by-product of this desire.

More accurately, Plotinos discusses art under the head of "Intelligible beauty." It is, of course, the nature of art to produce beauty. Art works in the following way. "All the productions of art and nature are the works of a certain wisdom which ever presides over their creation." Art and Nature work in analogous ways. When nature wants to create, she contemplates what is beautiful. When an artist wants to create, he appeals to the image of form which is in his own soul, and expresses it; in a lower type of beauty than that which is in

(1) See below, Rosenkrantz (2) Ennead V Bk.8 Para5
his own soul, yet in a beautiful way. Art, then, gives form to matter. Of two blocks of stone, one rough and the other fashioned by the sculptor's chisel, the latter is beautiful because it has form, and it is therefore artistic.

It is of interest to note that, far from following Aristotle's dictum, Plotinos places himself, by deliberately attacking his theory of imitation, on the other side. Yet in the two doctrines there is some similarity to be noted; for both appeal to the image in the mind of the artist.

The Ugly in Art.

Plotinos is important to us for other reasons than his contributions to this problem. He tells us what ugliness is, that it is entirely foreign to beauty; and we know that art aims at beauty and form. The answer, then, which he gives to the question "What place has the ugly in art," is simply "None."

Remarks.

The points of value of Plotinos' interesting but bewildering aesthetic to the problem of ugliness may be tabulated thus:

1- He was the first to recognize the problem of the nature of the ugly. Aristotle and Plutarch had known that its place in art must be assigned; but they did not discuss its nature. Plotinos was the first to recognize that, (1) "If we can discover of what ugliness consists and what is its cause, we shall have achieved an important element in the solution we are seeking."

2- He was the first to work out a system of metaphysical aesthetic.

(3) " Dk.6 Para 5
3- He insisted upon the moral ugliness, describing an ugly soul as intemperate, unjust, entirely depraved. This is discussed above(1)

4- He insisted, also, that the soul has a special faculty which does nothing but appreciate beauty. Kant's adaption of this view later came close to revolutionizing the whole science of aesthetic.

Unreliable though this doctrine is, because of its very nature, it is at the same time important as a turning from Aristotle, and is a contribution to the field in the above points.

(1) This description will be well to keep in mind, in all discussions of ugly character.
Edmund Burke's views on the question here under discussion are not at all complicated; they are very clearly stated in his work on "The Sublime and the Beautiful." His viewpoint is that based upon the emotional reactions called forth by different sensations.

What is Beauty?

"By beauty I mean that quality, or those qualities in bodies by which they cause love or some other passion similar to it."

This is a clear enough statement of his viewpoint to stand without further elaborations; however, since he has discussed the elements of beauty, it would be well for us to review these. Beauty is not caused by proportion; the swan, a beautiful bird has a neck longer than the rest of its body. It is not caused by fitness; the snout of a hog is fit for rooting, yet is certainly not beautiful. It is not caused by perfection. The following qualities, however, may be found in beautiful objects. they are small, smooth, (that is, never angular), yet varied not monotonous; they are delicate and of clear and bright but not glaring colors.

Virtue (see Plotinos), Burke places outside of the scope of beauty, inasmuch as our duty rests upon reason, not upon the insecure ground of appeal to emotion.

What is Ugliness?

It must be noted that bodies lacking the qualities of beauty are not ugly, but neutral. Ugliness is, however, the direct opposite of beauty; so that bodies having the opposite

(1) Sublime and Beautiful Part III Sec. 1
elements to those of beauty, that is, objects which are large, angular, crude, or glaring are ugly. In order to understand what is meant here, it is necessary to assume a middle state, in which objects are neither large nor small, smooth nor angular, delicate nor crude, beautiful nor ugly.

Burke's significant statement regarding ugliness, however, is that in which he links it with the sublime. For the sublime is that in which causes pain and fear, horror and astonishment and yet contains elements of vastness, power, and infinity, so that it also inspires admiration, reverence, or respect; and thus the ugly, particularly in nature (though in art also), is capable of approaching.

What is Art?

Burke's remarks on the subject of art are very elementary. Avowedly following Aristotle, he says that we take pleasure both in imitating and in observing imitation. This is the basis of painting, which affects us by the laws of nature between bodies of certain form and color and certain consequent feelings in our minds, plus the pleasure of imitation. Poetry, however, affects us through words also, so that, except in so far as it imitates human nature, it is not strictly an imitative art.

To the principle of imitation, Burke adds this remark, that "if the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, we may rely upon it that the power of the poem or picture is more to the nature of the thing itself, than to the mere effect of imitation, or to a consideration of skill of the imitator, however, excellent."

(1) Part III Sec. XXI  (2) Part V Sec. 1  (3) Part I Sec. XVI

(4) Aristotle rarely saw it in any other form, however, so that Burke's departure is not so radical.
It may be seen from this that his view is simply that of Aristotle, somewhat softened by a lack of dogmatism, and broadened with the widening of the field of art.

The Ugly in Art.

It may be seen from the above consideration that the ugly may have two places in art:

1- That of giving pleasure in imitation, "The meanest things are capable of giving us pleasure," particularly in still-life painting. This is simply a repetition of Aristotle's theory and therefore needs no elaboration.

2- That of serving as a part of the sublime (see above) which certainly may have a place in art.

Remarks.

Burke's treatise is by no means the most important in the subject; it is neither the most exhaustive, nor the most worthy in its analysis. It is important, however, for three reasons.

1- It shows how the Aristotelian idea of imitation as the basis of art has retained its force through twenty centuries.

2- It bases aesthetic entirely upon the emotional reactions to certain sensations, aiding in developing the modern subjective view.

3- It links the ugly with the sublime, this helping to widen the scope of ugliness, to the point where it is included in beauty, and becomes more and more difficult to define, so much so, in fact, that it now tends to lose its identity entirely.

(1) Ibid
LESSING

The most thorough classicist on our list is the German critic and author, G. E. Lessing. He is unique in the field, in that he not only criticised but also created. His "Nathan der Wiedere", and "Emilia Galotti" are both splendid works of dramatic arts. The "Laocoon", upon which this review is based, was written in a spirit of revolt against liberal views of his day, and is noteworthy for its classical conservatism and its keen analysis. He intended it to contradict notions arising from confusing poetry and painting; these two being divisions of art, the former standing for those arts in which mode of imitation is progressive, the latter for all the plastic arts. The Laocoon group, and Virgil's story of it are frequently used as examples of the two types of arts.

What is Beauty?

Lessing's importance lies in a slightly different place. He is important for his theory of art, rather than of beauty. Regarding this, he assumes that it is commonly recognized, and proceeds, as does Aristotle, on this assumption.

This much however, he does reveal. The highest forms of beauty are the human body. Every object, to be beautiful, must be compared to another object of the same genus; for instance, the "Venus" is beautiful by comparison with other bodies. Landscapes have no such comparison, and hence lack beauty. Of two mountain slopes, who can say which is the more beautiful?

What is Ugliness?

As with beauty, Lessing devotes no portion of his work to
describing the ugly; yet he spends so much on its place in art that we may be safely guided by inference.

Among the usages of art which he describes as ugly are those which portray certain emotions, such as grief or pain, by distortion of the face or body. But, while particularly interested in these, he expands its dominion to include also the ridiculous, the horrible and the disgusting. For further definitions of these terms we may best refer to our own experiences and conceptions. However, he does define the ridiculous as contrast of the perfect with the imperfect, and enlightens us with the knowledge that the ugly requires several unbecoming parts, all of which we can include in one view, that the horrible equals the sum of the disgusting and the terrible; and that "if no one will look at you," you might be considered ugly.

Examples of ugliness as he saw it are worth quoting in order that his idea of the word, which is perhaps close to the common one, might be properly understood. He would condemn a picture of the resurrection of Lazarus, in which, as was once done, a spectator is represented with his fingers compressing his nose, to avoid the unpleasant odor; or such a "disgusting" device as is seen in Beaumont and Fletcher's "The Sea Voyage," where hunger is portrayed by a repulsive catalogue of articles which would satisfy the hunger of the sailors; or Hesiod's "Sorrow" portrayed with a running nose. While these things are disgusting or terrible, and therefore more than simply ugly, they give us an idea of what he meant by the term, and came

(1) As Laokoon might have shown but did not.
(2) Ch. XXIII (3) Ch. II (4) Ibid (5) Ibid
within our scope. All are taken from artistic creations familiar to him.

What is Art?

Lessing's contributions here are very important. Like Aristotle, he judges on the basis of classical pieces he observed; unlike Aristotle, however, he reached the conclusion that art aims not at imitation, but rather at beauty. Assuming that Greek art is the only standard, Lessing proceeds to give many examples to prove his point. He is careful, however, to first draw the line between plastic art and poetry, from the confusion of which the false notions had come. Then, having drawn the line as it has been pointed out above, Lessing gives his theory of painting. It is shown in this quotation:

"All I want to establish is, that among the ancients, beauty was the highest law of the plastic arts." Or again, "The wise Greek artist painted nothing but the beautiful; even the beauty of a lower order was only his relaxation, his accidental subject."

These statements need little elaboration. Art aims at beauty; it rejects and avoids ugliness. "Who would paint you when no one would look at you?" asks the Greek. The modern, the modern to Lessing as to us, answers "However mis-shapen you are, I will paint you, and though no one will look with pleasure at you, they will at my picture, because it will be an evidence of my skill in knowing how to delineate such a horror so faithfully."

But this is not his theory of plastic art. He is decidedly antit-Aristotelian, caring nothing for imitation, and

(1) Preface Ch. 11
(2) Ibid
everything for beauty. In poetry, he is a little more lenient.
Poetry is a progressive art, depending upon a series of impres-
sions, one of which may annul or elaborate the other; and the
total impression is the aim of a number. Hence, as will be
shown later, poetry may use the ugly; and it may also have,
what painting lacks, "charm" or "beauty in motion;" that is,
the beauty of a string of words, as euphonious words, and of
a succession of ideas, the sum of which is beautiful.

The Ugly in Art.

Here we find Lessing's chief contribution. Let us first
consider painting, or plastic art, of which the Laokoon group
is a classical example. This he calls a combination of beauty
and pain, in which shrieks are softened to sighs, and the
highest degree of emotion is toned down to a more moderate
point. This, says Lessing, was the habit of the ancients; they
either abstained entirely from portrayal of emotions expressed
by distortion, or softened it till it had a measure of beauty.
For example, Timanthes' painting "the Sacrifice of Iphigenia"
conceals the face of the father; not because it was beyond the
power of the painter to express his sorrow fully, but because
to have portrayed it would have been to introduce distortion,
ugliness into the picture; and this he could not do. Indig-
mination they softened to seriousness; rage and despair they a
avoided. There were Greeks who did not hesitate to use the
ugly; Pausan drew the human body in its most ugly and faulty
extremes, and Pyrcus loved to paint dirty workshops and apes;
but the Greeks ostracized them. Aristotle warned young people
to avoid Pausan, and his fellows gave Pyrcus the insulting
name of "Dirt Painter". The main body of the Greeks loved
and insisted upon dignity. Their idea of art was to portray
deal beauty, not ideal ugliness. The Thebans even demanded

\[1\]

it, by law.

It has already been noted that the Greeks, and Lessing
with them, refused to "paint you when no one will look at you!"
They take no pride in skill in imitation, Aristotle's dictum
to the contrary notwithstanding. Lessing can see no value
or pleasure in seeing things well imitated, and learning there-
by. Painting as a purely imitative art may portray the ugly,
but painting as a fine art never can.

Here is the difference between poetry and painting. The
latter gives only one impression; the former gives a series,
in which the total impression depends upon several contributing
sensaions; and during this series one may arise which is a
form of the ugly, but which may by those succeeding be balanced,
or softened into an artistic part of an artistic work. An
object, to be ugly, must have several ugly features, all of
which may be seen at the time of the total impression; and
when we arrive at the "total impression" in poetry, what was
ugly when first seen has sunk into a minor part with those
elements which make it ugly forgotten. Any of the examples
given above will show this.

Drama has a special advantage, for it is the aim of
tragedy to cause sympathy as well as pleasure, and the horrible
may be used for this purpose. But even this is softened, as
Sophocles softened the suffering of Philoctetes.

So the ugly has no use or place whatever in plastic art
but may be used in poetry, or "progressive" art, if softened

(1) Ch.11
to either the horrible or the ridiculous, to which the disgusting may contribute; and the reason for this is the power of poetry to balance one impression with another, to reveal the bad side of a man by balancing it with the good, and thus fit the ugly into the whole artistic piece.

Remarks.

As noted above, Lessing is the thorough classicist; the most orthodox, the least lenient in the matter of ugliness. As Aristotle stands at one end of the scale of aesthetic theories, with his principle of imitation, Lessing stands at the other, with his emphasis upon beauty as the essential in art. We, to-day are far from him.

Aside from this position, his chief importance is that of his separation of plastic and progressive art, and insistence, particularly regarding the use of the ugly, that what may apply to one may not apply to the other.
This great German Philosopher has contributed as much to our field as he has to that of "pure reason." Carr says that his "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" has had more influence than any other modern book in this field. Like his other works, it is often difficult and abstruse, and based almost purely on a priori judgments, taken out of the air. He is interested primarily in the mode of appreciation of art, however, and merely touches ugliness in passing; so that for our particular problem he offers nothing as very far different from those we have already discussed; yet his historical significance is great enough to demand considerable space for him.

What is Beauty?

Kant gives these four definitions of beauty in his "Analytic of the Beautiful," in Book I.

1- Taste is the faculty of estimating an object or a mode of representation by means of a delight or aversion apart from any interest. The object of such a delight is called beautiful.

2- The beautiful is that which, apart from a concept, pleases universally.

3- Beauty is the form of finality in an object, so far as perceived in it apart from the representation of an end.

4- The beautiful is that which, apart from a concept, is perceived and recognized as the object of a necessary delight.

Omitting from our consideration the endless narrow divisions Kant is habitually making, we may follow, as much as it is to our advantage, the line of argument leading to
and explaining these definitions.

The first is, alone of the four, clear enough to stand with very little discussion. We often use the word "taste" in discussing works of art, and mean about what Kant meant by it, the faculty of aesthetic judgment. Kant insists, however, that it is purely aesthetic; that we form our opinions of the beautiful apart from any interest in it on our part. The agreeable gratifies man; the good makes him approve it, and set a value upon it; but the beautiful pleases him, and pleases a distinct faculty in him, the power of aesthetic judgment. As with Plotinus, the soul appreciates beauty by means of a specially ordered faculty; but where the faculty, to Plotinus, meant contact with not only the beautiful, the Uniate, into which Good and Intelligence are merged, with Kant it judges only aesthetic pleasures. This part of the mind is, as it were, in a world by itself. This distinction is very important.

This taste works in a unique way. It requires imagination in order to function; and this imagination is not simply reproductive, but creative and free. What it produces, however, coincides with the object viewed. In other words, when we see a painting, our taste is leading us to creating again the piece of art we are seeing; and when we strike something which appeals to the purely aesthetic taste, we may class it as beautiful; if it stimulates aversion to the taste, it is ugly.

In addition to being that which delights one's taste, beauty is also, apart from any concept, (power, balance, or
any contributing elements beyond pure beauty) pleasing to not only one but all of us. Hence, taste is universally the same; and as beauty is that which appeals to taste, it is also standard. Nothing can be said to be "beautiful to me;" it is beautiful universally.

At this point one is tempted to surrender, and say "let him explain it, who can." The third moment results in this definition: "Beauty is the form of finality in an object, insofar as it is perceived in it apart from the representation of an end." To understand it, let us appeal to Merdith for help. He says, "Purposiveness without purpose, or rather finality apart from an end, is only a pleasure projected (by the individual) into a given object, and depending upon a peculiar mode of interpreting the sensation of its effect upon the mind." So, "finality" is not the quality of teleological meaning in the object, but rather the basis for the pleasure of the individual, the subjective finality, the "last reference of beauty as it appeals to the individual," the aesthetic representation of imagination (of taste).

This may be somewhat clearer after we have seen what Kant understood as the ideal of beauty. He says, first" There can be no objective rule of taste by which what is beautiful may be defined by concepts, or qualities (as Burke tried to do). For every judgment from that source is aesthetic; that is, its determining ground is the feeling of the Subject, and not any concept of an object." But the feeling of aesthetic delight or aversion is universal, regarding certain objects.

(1) Pg. 69 Essay 111 (2) Merdith pg. 64
It is possible that there might be some products of taste which are exemplary; and in the individual there is an idea which might be called the archetype of taste.

Only man, who has in himself the end of his existence, may be capable of ideal beauty; but other objects and animals may be subjected to an "examination" which finds their animal beauty; that is, the average size and proportions of, perhaps, a thousand of the species; these are the proportions removed alike from the large and small extremes, and would be the proportions of the beautiful one of the species. This representation is not of itself beautiful; it merely gives the form of a beautiful specimen; but the characteristics must be added to it to attain beauty. "It is merely academically correct." But in the human, there is the only ideal beauty, that is, moral beauty.

This "archetype" may stand, vaguely, for that "finality" Kant refers to. By the words, "apart from the representation of an end," he meant that the object should not have a definite and obvious purpose; for example, ancient implements dug out of tombs are considered artistic, but have their end or purpose clearly shown; while a tulip may have finality, but, as we look at it, no end.

The fourth moment produces this definition: "The beautiful is that which, apart from a concept, is recognized as object of a necessary delight." The phrase "apart from a concept" has already been discussed. The other term in the definition which demands an explanation is "necessary."
word "inevitable" would perhaps suit the situation better. Meredith says "This pleasure, being immediately felt on reflection upon the mere form of the object seems inevitable." And as we immediately connect the pleasure with the object we also transfer the inevitability to the form of the object.

The sum of all these, appeal to disinterested taste, universality, apart from any "concepts", finality or subjective reference to the harmony of imagination of taste, and necessity of our delight in the beautiful is important as the basis of the moral purpose of beauty, though it leaves us in the dark as to what we may consider beautiful. In his general remarks at the end of the section, however, Kant gives us a somewhat clearer explanation. "Everything runs up into the concept of taste as a critical faculty by which an object is estimated in reference to the free conformity to law of the imagination." Here is a seeming paradox; but this is explained by saying that the understanding contains a general law of form, but the imagination must be allowed freedom. Where the imagination is forced to conform absolutely to a set of laws there is no delight, in beauty, but delight in the perfect of good. Likewise, in the case of geometrically regular figures, circles and squares, called by some the most pure examples of beauty, the delight is the same as the delight in knowledge; it certainly requires no taste to take delight in a circle than in a scrawly outline, or a regular room more than in one in which the walls form obtuse angles.

The regularity that conduces to the concept of an object is, in fact, the indispensable condition of grasping the object
as a single representation. This is the extent to which conformity to law is required. But "where all that is intended is the maintenance of a free play of the powers of representation, in ornamental gardens, in the decoration of rooms, in all kinds of furniture that shows good taste, etc.; regularity in the shape of constraint is to be avoided as far as possible." For "all stiff regularity is thereatly repugnant to taste, in that the contemplation of it affords us no lasting entertainment." The free beauties of nature, therefore, are richer to taste than a pepper garden, and the song of the bird richer than the human voice, though neither knows any laws of the art, but only enough law to maintain their identities.

On the other hand, however, fire or rippling brooks do not bore us, since they allow our imagination free play; yet they are not necessarily beautiful; they simply charm the imagination.

Kant devotes a portion of his works to an analytic of the sublime, which he considers that with reference to which all else looks small.

How to interpret this is the problem. Kant, however, we know, had in mind a significance of beauty and art. "The empirical interest in the beautiful exists only in society. It is inevitable that we should look upon taste in the light of a faculty for estimating whatever enables us to communicate even our feelings to everyone else, and hence as a means of promoting that upon which the natural inclination of everyone is set." So beauty, or rather taste, helps society. It also stands as a "symbol of morality," in a variation of Plato's doctrine, that contemplation of beauty disposes one to right

(1) Bk. 1 Pg 87  (2) Bk. 1 Pg 88  (3) Ibid
conduct. This term "symbol of morality," (though outside of our scope here) is always connected with Kant's aesthetic.

What is Ugliness?

The only direct reference Kant makes to the ugly deals with its place in art, rather than its nature. From his first moment, it is safe to infer that what causes an aversion is ugly, the direct opposite of the beautiful; but his other suggestion seems to point, as Meredith says, to a "beauty less pure than that described by Kant, which has as its opposite the ugly." His examples of ugliness such as "The Furies, disease, devastations of war, and the like," do not imply a purely aesthetic ugliness, that is, one resulting in a purely aesthetic negative judgment; for the ugly is not entirely disinterested, while beauty is.

What is Art?

A work of art, to Kant is the adequate expression of a concept, plus the genius of the artist; the basic difference between the critical faculty of taste and the creative faculty of genius is that between the beauty of nature and the beauty of art. The beauty of nature is a beautiful thing, and the beauty of art is a representation of a beautiful thing, and requires genius to create it.

By genius, Kant means the natural endowment which gives (1) the rule to art. The qualities of the imagination which is a part of taste, that is, freedom, yet a certain conformity to law, apply also to genius. Genius is also, like the faculty of aesthetic judgment, distinct, sui generis, independent of faculties of imitation or of learning, in toto; genius must have originality (beyond the mere imitation), sincerity,
freedom, (or autonomy, personality,) and above all, disinterestedness; he must think for himself, but from the standpoint of everyone else, losing himself in his work, and always thinking consistently.

Art must have the appearance of nature, all agree; but Kant when he says this, is far from meaning that it should be imitative. Pure imitation is mechanical; truth is a part of art, but, contrary to Aristotle, it is not the whole of it. When fine art has the appearance of nature, it is simply natural, easy, having exactness without labored effort.

Fine art is a thing sui generis, and its beauty is different from the beauty of nature; for to appreciate the latter one needs no idea of its causality, and must not see perfection in it, for perfection is part of the good, not the beautiful; while fine art must show causality and perfection in order to be appreciated. Because of this difference, a place must be found for

The Ugly in Art.

In this, says Kant, art is superior to nature; for art may use a beautiful description, even a representation, of what in nature would seem ugly. In two other remarks Kant shows striking similarity to Lessing. One is that the disgusting is the only form of ugliness which may not, alone, be represented conformably to nature without destroying all aesthetic delight. The other is a reference to the ancient sculpture, which either excluded the ugly, or softened it by a pleasant guise. He does not, however, say that it was bound by rule to do so; he merely mentions that this was the custom. Kant clearly concedes the ugly a place in art.

(1) Bk. II Para. 44
Remarks.

Beyond his obscurity and metaphysical treatment of the subject, Kant’s aesthetic has three distinctive and important features.

1- The idea of beauty as a symbol of morality, of a something didactic nature.

2- A purely subjective treatment.

3- The creation of a new world, the world of aesthetic, of beauty and art, of taste and genius, entirely independent of the world of logic, or of the rest of the world and mind, making its own judgments; a world of its own kind. This, says Carr, revolutionized the whole science of aesthetic, and influenced Groce profoundly.
HEGEL

This greatest and most besidering of German idealists, who stands at the peak, the extreme of idealism, has produced a gigantic four-volume work devoted to a scientific treatment of the problem of fine art. The result is his theory of the Idea in Art.

Beauty.

Hegel makes the distinction between the beauty of nature and that of art almost immediately; and in doing so he excludes the former from consideration. He seems to accept the common notion of natural beauty; but above what we are wont to speak of as natural beauties, of the sky, landscapes, and flowers, he places the beauty of art. This is of a higher type, because it has been produced by the human mind. "For the beauty of art is a beauty begotten, a new birth of mind; and to the extent that Spirit and its creation stand higher than nature and its phenomena, to that extent the beauty of art is more exalted than the beauty of nature." The "new birth of mind" is somewhat analogous to the soul in Christianity, given a new birth by baptism, "born again of the Spirit." The beauty of art has undergone a second and grander creation.

With this exalted idea of the beauty of art in mind, Hegel defines the "notional concept" of beauty. "It must combine meta-physical universality with the determinate concept of real particularity." That is to say, a notion of beauty, to be comprehensive, must be both broad and deep, general and particular.

What this beauty is, which fits this definition, is shown

(1) Vol. 1 Pg 2  (2) Vol. 1 Pg 28
in the discussion of fine arts proper. What he means by beauty is "the Idea."—It follows, says Hegel, that beauty and truth are, in one respect, identical. They are distinct, however, in this, that beauty is, strictly speaking, the sensuous semblance of the Idea, or the Idea as it is shown to our senses. The Idea is equivalent to Eternal Truth.

But Hegel has still another way of defining beauty. Beauty as in nature, or apart from art, that is, the Beauty of abstract form, is to be viewed as Uniformity, Symmetry, Conformity to Rule, and Harmony. This is, of course, far below the beauty of the Idea. The terms here given are well enough understood for the position to be grasped; Hegel has given them no recondite significance.

Ugliness.

The ugliness which Hegel considers in his discussion is that which we know as ugliness, without any involved spiritual significance. It is the opposite of the lower beauty of abstract form, rather than of the higher beauty of Idea. Therefore, it may be thought of as that which lacks the four qualities just mentioned, those of Uniformity, Symmetry, Conformity to Rule, and Harmony.

Art.

When a philosopher of the profoundness of Hegel devotes a four-volume scientific treatise to fine art, there is certain to be a great deal more in this work than can ever be covered in such a survey as this. For this reason it seems best to give an eclectic treatment of the subject, and pay prime attention only to the fundamentals.

(1) Vol. 1 Pg 33   (2) Vol.1 Pg 184
The realm of fine art is the realm of Absolute Spirit, because in fine art, mind, the mind of man, becomes identical with Absolute Mind, the Universal Mind, the Mind of the Idea. But the Idea viewed as the Beautiful in art is not the Idea in a strict sense, but rather the Idea in concrete form, with the more specific property of being essentially individual reality, and individual configuration of reality whose express function it is to make manifest the Idea, in its appearance. This beauty, or Idea at which art aims is essentially free and infinite. This creation of free artistic activity, Hegel insists, was the classical ideal; and he accepts it, also, as his own. Art releases us from the limits of the finite.

The source of art, Hegel says, is that man is a thinking animal, for whom things exist twice, as perceived, and as re-created for meditation. This "recreation" of a fact of Nature a function of the imagination, is turned by a higher feeling into a work of creative art. Thus creation of art is between the two extremes of rule-of-thumb imitation, and of ruleless unchecked inspiration; there is a moderate degree of each in the process. And the piece of art thus created has only one function. "Art, as we consider the true notion of it, has only one supreme function. It has to set forth, within the grasp of our actual senses, what is its essential content."

This "essential content" is, of course, the Idea. Around it centers all of Hegel's theory. No other aim of art, beyond the Idea, will he admit. It is not "imitation", for this takes in too much that is superfluous, and even then it lags far behind nature itself in trying to "represent" an
object truly; for it cannot give complete imitation, because of handicaps of material and dimensions. Rösel's small imitations of insects may have been so realistic and so deceptive, which latter point is not praise-worthy in art, that a monkey ate them; yet they were not insects, and the artist had no right to feel complimented. It is surely below the aim of art "to fool monkeys and doves." Nature is always closer to herself than are our imitations. The worst objection, however, is that beauty disappears as an end, and mere correctness replaces it; the distinction between ugliness and beauty loses its value, and the Hottentot idea of it may have equal place with the highest form. Neither is it an acceptable aim to make art a means for allowing man to express all his emotions. It has never done that; and besides, this is impossible as an aim. What artist could create purely in order for other's emotions and his own to be expressed? It has, as Aristotle says, the power of "katharsis," of cleansing us of our emotions; but this is only a by-product, not an end. Art has, also, a didactic result; but this too is only a by-product; it is far from the point to insist as did Ruskin, that each piece of art must teach us a moral lesson. And so, by a process of elimination, he again arrives at his theory of art, that it must express the Idea. An example of a work of art which does this is the one Lessing used, The Turk. This, says Hegel, retains the noble aspect of beauty, even while depicting supreme pain.

The divisions of art made by Lessing, into poetry and
painting, Hegel respects. He repeats the fundamental dis-
tinction, that poetry, which is progressive, is able to give
the entire ideal profundity of an event of fact, while paint-
ing is limited to one phase of it. In poetry, the really
poetic must remain the paramount end, and others, such as the
edifying, must be subordinate. " It is the poetic art which
is capable of absorbing most profoundly the entire fulness
of a spiritual content. In order that he (the poet) may
find it in his heart to create a free whole, he must have
liberated himself from all embarrassment from his subject-
matter, and be able to survey the external and ideal aspects
thereof with the same free glance."

In order to understand his full theory, it is best to re-
peat the cross-division of the arts which he makes. There
are three types of art: the Symbolic, The Classical, and the
Romantic. He defines them thus: "Symbolic art seeks after
that unity of ideal significance and external form which Classical art in its substantive individuality succeeds in securing
to senses of perception, and which Romantic art passes beyond,
owing to its excessive insistence upon the climes of the spirit."

Symbolic art, then, is just what it seems to be, art avow-
edly devoted to some special representation of a special content.
Classical art is that art upon which Lessing based his theories.
art characterized by its reverse and conformity to certain rules,
which helps give it a dignified beauty. Romantic art demands
spontaneity of expression of what is in the artist's mind, and
in its extreme disregards all rules.
The Ugly in Art.

Hegel here maintains a neutral viewpoint, giving some examples of successful use of the ugly, and explaining them.

Art, of course, aims at beauty in a higher sense, the beauty of The Idea. But there are in this Idea some examples of what is not beauty on the lower phase, but, according to common standards, ugly. This type of ugliness, that in which we are primarily interested, is not to be found so much in classical as in Romantic art. For "that beauty disappears from it (Romantic art) which tended to raise the outside envisagement above the soilure of time, and the traces that unite it with a past, in order to declare the beauty of existence in its blossom, in the room of what had otherwise been a dismantled image. Romantic art interweaves the threads of its soul experience with the contingent material of Nature's workshop, and gives unfettered play to the emphatic features of ugliness itself."

While in his neutral position he evidently accepts the general principles of both types, Hegel judges as to the ugly in art according to his own standard, the presence or absence of content. This standard, however, he sets rather on the conservative side; not so much as Lessing, yet classical, evil and the repulsive are outside the bonds of harmony, and are therefore not fit for a place in art. Dominance of power, the horrible, the unfortunate may be fit subjects, if they are needed to give a complete picture of a Character; but cowardice, envy, and meanness which dominate a character, are repulsive, and useless to art. Neither can they be excused for their ex-
actness of representation. Imitation is not Hegel's standard.

The great artists, feeling this want of harmony, have never given us a picture of pure evil, though the moderns have tried it. Neither do they give us really complete pictures of ugliness; they always soften it to some degree, whether only a little, in Romantic art, or a great deal in Classical art. The belligerent is always an element in epics, but war is never represented as horrible; there is dignity even in the death of Hector, dragged around the city of Troy. In the Laocoon, the supreme pain, tension of the body, and distention of the muscles, does not keep away the noble aspect of beauty; the expression is not carried to the extremes of grimace, distortion, and overstrain. Shakespeare's vulgar characters, Richard II for instance, are elevated by a lofty intelligence; they show "neither vindication nor damnation, (1) but merely a review of the general condition of destiny."

And even the scene from the Passion of the North German painters, particularly Albrecht Durer, which show the savagery of the soldiers, the evil aspect of mocking, the fieriness of the hate against Christ, and give "particular emphasis to features of ugliness and distortion" and unbridled exhibitions of passions, are treated with a noble, reserved dignity, though they involve a technical loss of harmony. As an example of unbalanced and poor use of ugliness, he gives the French plays, in which the low characters are portrayed as wholly base.

A common use of the ugly comes with the ridiculous, which Hegel defines as made up of softened, or at least less violent ugliness. This is an element in the comic, which depends upon

(1) Vol. 1 Pg. 767
a contrast, and must have geniality. But here, too, the ugly is either elevated, or softened, rather than presented in the absolute. This position is the natural inference from his idealism, for the Idea is never wholly ugly or evil.

Remarks.

The most exhaustive, and in many ways the most obscure of all our writers on fine art in all its phases, Hegel is especially note-worthy for his thoroughness and conservatism in judgment of art, and for his idealism, which states what is held by nearly all who deal with art as a thing in itself. Where Hegel appeals to us particularly is in his theory, minus his involved elaboration of it, that art that has but one function, and that is to present the significant, the Idea; for we are all, more or less, idealists when considering fine art.
THE POST-HEGELIAN SCHOOL

Following the two great philosophers just discussed there rose two schools of aesthetic critics, one after each master. Kant's followers are worthy, in our special study, only of mention. Schopenhauer, Herbart, and some lesser lights, Zimmermann, Fechner, and Stumpf, are the most important. Their method was called that of "exact aesthetic", and gave minute and elemental analysis of different examples of beauty, from which they extracted general principles. Schopenhauer is interesting for his peculiar pessimistic principles. He looked upon beauty as a means of freeing us from our great besetting nemesis, the will to live; it frees us in some mystic way from this world.

Other writers of some importance are Goethe, Schiller, and Schlegel, who came between Kant and Hegel, but are best treated very summarily, at this point. Goethe is note-worthy for his concise statement of artistic principles; that is, that the aim of art is the significant. Schiller says that man produces art when he is at play, relaxed. He also joins Burke in linking the sublime with the ugly, thus giving it a place in art. Schlegel shows how ugliness keeps irresistably crowding inside the scope of beauty, regardless of how hard he tried to keep it out.

The Hegelian School is more numerous, and much more productive, as regards our particular problem. It includes Solger, Weisse, Viescher, Rosenkrantz, Schaeler and Hartmann. Rosenkrantz and Hartmann are treated separately. The others may be treated collectively, with a few individual comments. They are all idealists, searching for the significant in art.

(1) Bosanquet says these have "neglected the problem of ugliness."
In the problem of ugliness, too, they follow Hegel, to whom the ugly did not appear in absolute form, but rather, seemed relative and of minor importance. Seizing upon this rather thin implication of Hegel's, Bosanquet goes on to show that with all of them the limits of beauty vanish, the gates are lowered to permit more and more of the ugly to enter, and ugliness becomes only relative.

Special comments might be made regarding the theory of ugliness in each of these. They are of minor importance historically, and their special comments show the general development, while being in essence merely interesting side matters, by-products.

Solger, thoroughly Hegelian, calls beauty the manifestation of a phenomenon with Idea. However, he then proceeds a step farther, a step which Hegel avoided with care, and calls ugliness a manifestation of a phenomenon without the Idea.

Weisse anticipated Rosenkrantz in allowing the ugly a place in art only in subordination, either in the comic, or in the "Romantic Spirit," in which the apparently ugly is glorified, in the style of "Beauty and the Beast."

Schaefer stated the same principle, of a vanishing ugliness somewhat differently. He explained that ugliness enters into all beauty, and when used in art is no longer ugly. Ugliness itself is due to the confusion of phases of the beautiful; for example, the sublime, plus the graceful, equals

(1) Schaefer here stands between Aristotle and Santayana; all of them claim the ugly in art is no longer ugly, though each reaches this conclusion through a different train of thought.
the ugly, when Jove, himself divine, begins to dance; it is not fitting for him to be graceful.

The affiliation of this group to Hegel is easily seen. The aim of art is the Idea, whether it is called the significant or the characteristic or some other abstract name. And the ugly, in every case, is that which lacks this Idea; and what was once called ugly is admitted, with varying modifications, into art, as a part of the Idea. In this we see a very definite step toward the pet principle of Bosanquet, and the glory of the moderns, that is, the disappearance of the ugly as such.
of all the writers in aesthetic, the only one to give
prime importance to ugliness as the key to theories of art
was Rosenkrantz, who devoted a work to "The Aesthetic of
Ugliness." He set out deliberately to emphasize this side of
the problem of aesthetic, which he rightly considered to have
been neglected.

What is Beauty?

As with others whom we have considered, Rosenkrantz,
being interested primarily in another phase of the subject,
pays little attention to defining beauty, but simply assumes
it. He says however that it is characterized by certain
qualities, as balance and symmetry, which are perverted, in
ugliness, into their opposites. It will become evident also
that beauty is again, as in Hartmann, a relative thing, and
on a wide scope, including much that is ugly; this follows the
widening tendency mentioned above.

What is Ugliness?

The ugly, as such, is the negation of the beautiful, the
perversion of the qualities of beauty into their opposites, as
suggested above. This means the perversion of the sublime in-
to the commonplace, the pleasing into the repugnant, the
(1) simply beautiful into caricature. Real ugliness, however,
occurs only when in a being capable of freedom, unfreedom is
found; in other words, only in man and in art can there be real
ugliness. Formlessness and incorrectness are lower forms of
beauty. The real ugliness is crime or human hypocrisy of

(1) Bosanquet Pg.404
various kinds; and the "ugliest ugliness" is that of bad art. Rosenkrantz does not concede a beauty in what is commonly called ugly, as he indicates when he calls his task of discussing ugliness a "Descent into the Hell of the World of Beauty."

What is Art?
Rosenkrantz assumes, and the simple statement of his assumption is enough for our purpose, that art arises from a desire for pure, unmixed beauty.

The Ugly in Art.
Here Rosenkrantz has made one of our most important contributions.

Though art arises from a desire for pure unmixed beauty, it is undeniable, says Rosenkrantz, that the ugly has a place in it; for "if the mind and nature are to be admitted to presentation in their full dramatic depth, the ugly of nature and the evil and diabolic must not be omitted. Even the Greeks, however much they lived in their ideal, had their Harpies, Chimerae, Cypolop, Satyrs, their lame god, crimes, madness, and most nauseating diseases. How can this be, when the end of art is to satisfy the desire for "pure, unmixed beauty?" How can there be ugliness in a thing of this nature? Two answers are possible. First, the ugly may be used as a foil for beauty, which it heightens by contrast. In this duty, ugliness would have only a subservient position, and not be in art on its own merit. But Rosenkrantz rejects this, on the theory that beauty is distinct, and needs no foil; and Rosenquet rejects it also, on the ground that the ugly has
a better purpose; so, with this double assault, it must
inevitably fall. The second reason, however, both approve;
the ugly is necessary in order that we may give the complete
representation of the idea, and in order that we may "see
evil, and overcome it," aesthetically speaking.

If the ugly is admitted into art, must it be modified?
Yes, says Rosenkrantz; for, while beauty needs no foil, ugliness
does; the ugly, alone, could never be a subject for art. Ugli-
ness should be idealized in such a way that it remains ugliness,
and does not change to beauty, yet idealized. In order to do
this, it is softened by being subjected to the laws of beauty,
such as balance and symmetry, and "small and unessential mat-
ters of painful or sickening detail are crushed out."

So here is the answer to our problem. The ugly has a
place in art, but only after it has been deliberately and
substantially softened or "idealized".

This is Rosenkrantz's chief contribution; though he
was led to make it by the gross error of his principle of art.

It is also interesting to note that in his excuse for
the use of ugliness in art, that it is necessary for the full
portrayal of the idea, or of life as it is, he gives precedent
to modern realists, in the basis of their theories.
HARTMANN

Of the host of German writers on aesthetic in more recent times, only Hartmann and Rosenkrantz have made enough of a contribution to deserve a place in our discussion.

What is Beauty?

Hartmann presupposes the definition Bosanquet later gave to beauty. "That which has characteristic or individual expressiveness for sense perception of imagination, subject to the conditions of general or abstract expressiveness in the same medium." Bosanquet himself says that this definition is of wider range than the common conception.

Hartmann's peculiar position, however, is this, There are six stages of beauty; each stage has the feature of characteristicness. The first five are mere formal beauties, the last the concretely beautiful. The six stages are these: 1- the sensuously pleasant; 2- the mathematically or dynamically pleasing; 3- the passive teleological, or decorative; 4- the vital; 5- the regular or normal type of any species; 6- the concretely beautiful, which is above form.

Bosanquet explains it thus. He first quotes Hartmann: "The beauty of the lower grades suffers diminution by reason of the laws of form that prevail in the higher grades." He then adds this elaboration: "Thus uniform repetition is lost in symmetry, simple bilateral symmetry is lost in the whole balance of a picture, the highest refinements of form, it is said, are incompatible with devotion to the more recondite harmonies of color, smooth or simple tone combinations do not meet the needs of great musicians at their greatest, and the normal general regularity of human lineaments (the so called
Greek or statuesque outline) or the uniformity of respectable
class character must be departed from in painting and in the drama
in order to reveal fully the beauty of individual characteri-
(1)

As one ponders carefully over these terms, and gradually
begins to see the light, two features reveal themselves. One
is that with each stage, though it is not easy to see exactly
what each stage is, form is thrown aside and sheer, concrete
beauty is added, a beauty which transcends form; the beauty
becomes what Bosanquet calls more recondite, less bound by
law. The other feature is that beauty is relative, since it is
able to evolve from a lower stage, though several steps, to a
highest type, while each stage below this is not absolute, but
only more nearly beautiful than another. Both these have a
bearing on the question,-

What is Ugliness?

Hartmann defines ugliness as "the expression of the
illogical in a world that is essentially logical." But it is
actually relative; there is some ugliness in all beauty, and
all features of characteristic beauty are potentially ugly.
"Ugliness is aesthetically justifiable in so far as it is the
vehicle of the concretion of the beautiful." My interpretation
of this statement is that when the progression is going on,
form loses out, and this losing of form is an adding of uglin-
ness, of a type; a loss of "logicalness," since form is logical.
This fits his definition of ugliness.

What is Art?

Hartmann says that nature is occasionally ugly, when and

(1) Pg. 431
in so far as she does not aim at beauty. The same may be said of art. And since this is his theory, he follows Lessing very faithfully and regarding

    The Ugly in Art

bans it almost entirely. He does allow it in modified forms in tragedy, however, as did Lessing, as "Modifications of the beautiful," that is, the touching, the comic, the tragic, and the humorous. So, the ugly is in art, as in beauty; but as a part of beauty, not as ugliness.

Remarks.

The importance of Hartmann is chiefly in his including ugliness in beauty, and making it, as beauty, relative and hard to define. This principle, which will be developed later, is the chief of the recent developments.
Bernard Bosanquet, the brilliant and versatile English critic, has written a fine "History of Aestheti c," in which the subject as it now stands, with the problems it includes, is presented, and in which some of his own views are given. Bosanquet gives full place to the ugly, and sets forth the theory that the frontier of beauty is slowly widening to include that which we know as ugly.

What is Beauty?

Bosanquet's definition of beauty has already been given, but it will bear repetition. Beauty is "That which has characteristic or individual expressiveness for the sense perception or imagination, subject to the conditions of general or abstract expressiveness in the same medium." That is, whatever seems to us to be characteristic and individual, yet is consistent with the laws or limitations put upon it by its very nature, such as the limits of each art, that plastic arts do not move, etc.

This, of course, is a broad definition, much more so than many we have seen before. The following suggestion may serve to limit it somewhat.

Beauty, says Bosanquet, is symbolic, and instead of being connected with the good, goes behind morality to "that soul of things," which art and morality render each in its own way. With this sort of dictum, it seems as though he too has something idealistic and recondite in mind when he speaks of beauty, and thus shares the general opinion. Beauty proceeds in grades

(1) Above, Hartmann
(3) Aesthetic
Pg 5
(3) He includes the strong and the significant in true beauty.
to concreteness, as Hartmann says; yet it is not true that formal beauty vanishes as the "concrete" beauty increases; for this concreteness gives imagination more play, for the achievement of greater formal beauty. It is also untrue that nature aims at beauty. Bosanquet calls this "an antiquated notion." Beauty comes as a byproduct of the logical tendency of nature; flowers have no decorative purpose. "Nature is logical, and hence, prima facie, beautiful throughout." The first aim of nature is rationality; beauty comes incidentally.

Here is his theory of beauty, broad, idealistic, yet not carried away by any particular prejudice, and logically produced from a thorough study of the field of aesthetic, which was not open to most of the others.

What is Ugliness?

All through his works, Bosanquet is insisting that ugliness is only apparent and relative, that limits of beauty vanish, and what was once ugly becomes included in beauty. "What strikes us now" he says, "is not merely the way ugliness enters into beauty, but also how beauty enters into ugliness, permeates it."

True ugliness, says Bosanquet, is not the apparent ugliness, which contains features of beauty, not what we call ugliness, but "the fraudulent perverse of the Beautiful."

"What we have to dread as ugliness unsuperable by healthy perception, or by the characteristic of art, is not the narrow, the rude, the terrible, the grotesque, or even the vicious, when revealed for what it is; as plainly represented in

(1) See Hartmann (above) ugly is art.
in their apparent ugliness, these elements become modifications of the beautiful. We must look for the insuperable ugliness in the highest degree in the falsely beautiful, produced by the confusion of aims and feelings in art. We shall find it in the sentimental represented as touching, the effeminate as tender, the feeble taken to be delicate, the tawdry, brilliant, the monstrous, strong.

So, the ugly is not the negative of beauty, but the falsely beautiful. Early in the work, Bosanquet insists upon differentiating between the ugly in art and the ugliness of bad art. His idea of insuperable ugliness, given above, seems to be the latter.

In nature, the only insuperable ugliness is in those disfigurements of individuality which indicates an alien nature asserting itself victoriously within a higher form of existence." Animal decay is an example of this. But, as said before, nature is prime-facie beautiful.

Ugliness, then, is relative, and only insuperable as false-hood.

What is Art?

We have already seen that Bosanquet ridicules the idea of nature aiming at beauty. In essentials, the theory of art is analogous. This artist aims at the significant, never at beauty as such. "In art the aim is rationally expressed for sense; art aims not at beauty, but at the best expression of some particular content. Beauty results from this, but the only aim possible is the special content." To him, to imagine beauty as the aim of art is to rob it of its true meaning.
As Goethe says, "the guiding principle of art is the significant."

Explaining the beginnings of art, or the source of an artistic piece, Bosanquet resorts, again, to an intangible thing analogous to genius; the same thing works in appreciation. His definition almost assumes Kant's "different world, the world of aesthetic." "The artist or lover of natural beauty must be mastered by something in particular, something that lays upon him the necessity of appreciation or expression."

The Ugly in Art.

We have seen from Bosanquet's definition of ugliness that what we call ugly is not really, but only apparently so. At one point, he says, "Solger does not think that the ugly qua ugly can enter into art, and in this he is certainly right." This can be well understood, for, to him, the ugly as ugly is, simply, bad art, and this is banned from good art, for obvious reasons. However, what we and the other theorists we are dealing with have insisted upon calling ugly, he includes in art, for it is a part of beauty, and beauty is a part of it.

Remarks.

Bosanquet, at the peak of critical development in the field, has found it necessary to temper his idealism with some hair-splitting definitions, the very nature of which indicates the tendency for broadening the scope of beauty to include ugliness in it, and in art. He is eclectic, forming his own theory from the best of the others; and in making the careful distinctions thus required, becomes obscure and difficult.
RUSKIN AND THE ENGLISH CRITICS

Let us rest a short time from the mental gymnastics of the German philosophers, and discuss the theories of the English writers on aesthetic. These lie within our field, as the contributions to the problem of the English men of letters.

From the rather shallow efforts of Addison, up to the present, there have been many Englishmen, authors and critics, who have given their principles of criticism. This is particularly true of the nineteenth century, at the beginning of which stands Coleridge, and the end, Bosanquet. Although many have written on the subject, we will consider only Coleridge, William Morris, and Ruskin, in addition to Burke, who has been treated above, and Bosanquet.

Coleridge is at the peak of English literary criticism, but is not so important in aesthetic. Moreover, he produced no systematic treatment of the subject. Coleridge is a combination of Classicist and Romanticist. Although he was classical in his definition of beauty (which he called "the sense of a living law, in which every art finds its harmony in the concrete, the union of the shapely with the vital") he was romantic in his appreciation of it. "Both as an author and as a critic, he cared more for the symbolic than the simply beautiful." He was a mystic in criticism as in creation. He was impressed by the symbolic suggestiveness of Gothic art more so than by the statuesque beauty of the Greek. But he does not touch the problem of ugliness and falls thus outside our domain.

The versatile brain of William Morris, whose own medieval romances are remarkably beautiful things, gives another unique
doctrine. He says, "That thing which I understand by real art is an expression by man of his pleasure in labour." Again, "Never till our own day has an ugly or stupid glass vessel been made. In the hands of a good workman the metal is positively alive; and is, you may say, coaxing him to make something pretty. Nothing but commercial enterprise capturing an unlucky man and setting him down in a glass-makers chair with his pattern beside him; nothing but this kind of thing could turn out ugly glass."

Untechnical and full of holes, this doctrine has nevertheless an appeal; and, in addition to that, it comes from the heart, and makes up for what it lacks in soundness by true Victorian eloquence and sincerity.

The most important of these Victorian theorists, Ruskin, is interesting enough to merit special, though by no means exhaustive treatment.
Ruskin wrote chiefly of the plastic arts, particularly landscape painting, rather than on beauty or ugliness in the abstract, or on art as a whole.

He defines beauty, sufficiently for his purpose, thus:

"Any material object that can give us pleasure in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities without any direct and definite exertion of the intellect, I call in some way, or in some degree, beautiful." Ugliness he does not treat in such a way that it "seems cold enough for truth."

Art has three functions: First, to enforce the religious sentiments of men; second, to perfect their ethical state; third, to do them material service. The great apostle of the Beauty of Ugliness could never admit that art was dissociated from the other phases of life. Its prime aim is to please God. Each piece of art has a moral and didactic purpose, and the greatest art is that which contains the greatest number of the greatest ideas. The true art proceeds from the great soul, and is the outgrowth of an atmosphere of culture.

Qualities of art which he emphasizes are centered, from the viewpoint of scientific aesthetic, around characteristicness. Ruskin, in the Seven Lamps spends much time in detailed description of certain characteristic features, of curves, designs, and note-worthy parts which make it individual, and at the same time in sympathy with the rest of the world, and beautiful.

(1) Modern Painters Vol. 1 pt. 3 (2) Bosanquet
(3) Seven Lamps Ch. 2 Para 1 (4) Modern Painters Vol. 1 Pt. 1
"Seven Lamps of Architecture" summarizes Ruskin's principle of art very well. These are the qualities observed from Gothic Architecture, which good architecture must have. The first is Sacrifice, the element of a sincere human tribute to the things divine, and a sacrifice to the Maker, found in the building. The second is Truth, that it should not try to deceive the eye. Next is Power, giving an impression like that felt in the presence of a great force, and sympathy with the elements of power in Nature. The fourth is Beauty, which has already been defined. This could curtailed some in architecture, however. The fifth is Life; the piece must reflect the intellectual life which produces it. Next is Memory; it must be a storehouse of records, both of material and artistic facts, of its day. And the last is Obedience; "Not liberty, but law;" for a river that has overflowed its banks is inferior to one that has stayed in them.

Ugliness, says Ruskin, can never enter into the beautiful; yet if art is to be complete in its pictures (and, in order to teach, it must), it is needed.

Ruskin needs no comment beyond this, that the high moral tone of his work brings it under considerable condemnation from students of scientific aesthetic.
The leading figure among the contemporary aestheticians is the impressionist, Croce. His doctrine is unique; in fact, as one reads his "aesthetic" one gets the impression that he is actually in rebellion against all systematic philosophy, though he manages to adopt the obscurity of some systematic philosophers to a very extended degree. Croce is the only representation of the Italian school of writers in aesthetic whom we are considering.

In considering Croce, we will change the customary plan, and discuss him as he discusses himself. He proceeds in the following way.

There are two kinds of knowledge, intuitive and logical. In ordinary life, in education, politics, art, in life itself, intuitive knowledge is recognized as fundamental. But science and philosophy over look the fact, and build on logical knowledge alone, using intuition as a mere door-keeper. This is fundamentally a mistake, for intuition has excellent eyes of her own, and does not need the guidance of intellect. The charm of music, poetry, and painting is an intuitive fact, to the observer or reader; concepts are mingled with intuition, but they lose their value as concepts. Now every true intuition is an expression; the two are identical; intuitive activity has intuition to the extent that it expresses them. The intuitions of a painter are pictorial; of a poet, verbal. Beethoven's ninth symphony is his own intuition. But certain men have a greater aptitude, a more frequent inclination fully to express certain complex states of the soul; these are known (in common

(1) This is the basic error of Croce, as of many moderns.
language) as artists. Some very complicated and difficult expressions are rarely achieved, and these are called works of art.

Croce claims that the difference between artistic and inartistic intuitions are impossible to define; it is purely one of degree. If an epigram be art, why not a single word? If a landscape, why not a topographical sketch? There is but one aesthetic, and that is the science of intuitive or expressive knowledge. Neither is there such a thing as genius, beyond a mere quantitative excellence of intuitions.

Aesthetic pleasure comes when the artist has an intuition of his work for the first time, and "his countenance is radiated with the divine joy of the creator." There is another, a non-aesthetic pleasure, also, the pleasure of work well done; but the aesthetic pleasure is distinct from it. And there is also another pleasure in aesthetic, the pleasure of a day off (Croce seems ridiculous at times); but the aesthetic, or intuitive pleasure of the drama is distinct from it.

Discussing creation and appreciation, Croce accepts the common principle, that to judge a work of art is to reproduce it in ourselves. If we have found a musical theme, expression is complete; when we repeat it, we merely repeat what had happened before. Means of expression merely help us stamp our impressions on a piece that will hold them. Then the poem, piece of music, or piece of sculpture is the stimulus of the reproduction of this expression in us. Stated differently, the judicious activity, which judges and criticizes the beautiful
is identical with the creative activity which produces it. The only difference is in circumstances. The one is called genius, the other taste; but, actually, the two are identical. If this were not so, we could not judge, for the work of art would then be extraneous to us. "To judge Dante, we must raise ourselves to his level. We are not Dante, nor Dante we, but in that moment of judgment and contemplation, our spirits are one, and we and he are in that moment one single thing."

This is the last phase of the aesthetic activity.

Discussing our particular problems, Croce gives us some strange answers. Beauty is nothing more or less than successful expression. From this it follows that ugliness is unsuccessful expression. The beautiful is equal to the adequate. "The beautiful does not possess degrees; there is no conceiving a more adequate degree of expressiveness than the adequate. The ugly, or unsuccessful, however, does have degrees, ranging from the almost beautiful, which may be actually great, to the extremely ugly." (1)

From the viewpoint of the artist, beauty is given another feature. When the artist gropes for means of expressing an impression, his discarded phases or colors are ugly; the accepted, when the moment of purely aesthetic pleasure comes, are beautiful. That is, of course, if the piece is successful; yet every true intuition is successful. Every work of art is either beautiful or ugly. If the artist has seen clearly, the observer can put himself in the artist's position, and see the expression as beautiful. If the artist has seen vaguely, the

(1) Thus, what we call beautiful becomes, often, what Croce calls ugly, the reverse of the dominant tendency.
observer can see the work only as ugly. But one seeing clearly and the other vaguely is an impossible situation. In other words, a successful piece of work is always successful, and always appreciated.

The other problem in which we are chiefly interested, namely the place of the ugly in art, he calmly disposes of. "The problem is without meaning to us who can not recognize any ugliness save the anti-aesthetic or inexpressive." And, if what the masses call ugly is part of the successful representation, it is acceptable in art, a part of the beautiful.

Remarks.

With the most radical, rebellious, heretical doctrine of aesthetic yet profound, and a wide influence, having disciples all over, including Spingarn and others in America, Croce is in an interesting position in the field of aesthetic. He belongs to no school, except possibly his own. In his sections on previous writers on aesthetic, he admits some small debt to Kant, who divided the aesthetic world from the every day world; but, though Croce does the same, or rather makes use of this distinction, he has in mind a thing so different from Kant's aesthetic world that the debt is intransuble. Of course, his world is one of intuitions, where Kant's was one of taste; both are distinct from intellect; but Croce knew no such thing as a world of fine art and beauty, such as Kant had in mind.

But going beyond his refusal to join one school, Croce adopts a sarcastic, supercilious attitude, rather sneering at feeble efforts to solve problems he snaps his fingers at. Such suggestions as those mentioned above, that certain things
are called beauty, taste, genius, art, etc. in ordinary language, and his ridicule of those who try to solve the problem of the ugly in art, reflect his attitude. The fundamental fault in it is that his theory is itself full of holes; in addition to the fact that it simply answers problems somewhat as Dr. Johnson is said to have done, "With the butt end of a gun;" and in disregarding them he thinks he is solving them. Witness his treatment of the problem of the distinction between form and content in art; he needs none; yet there still are two elements in art. What of the type of beauty, which "gives us pleasure in the simple contemplation of it," as Ruskin says? Or of what we call ugly, which Croce himself called "extreme ugliness?"

And what of the place of the latter in art? Was Plutarch deluded when he suggested it? Croce says that it is for him to disregard the question, but where some other theory than his own is the general principle, the theorists have a hard time trying to reconcile it to their "false" theory of art, and have finally solved it by saying that the ugly is admissible when it can be overcome, that its duty is to heighten beauty by contrasts, and that the nauseating and disgusting, which constitute absolute ugliness, are barred. While thanking him for this splendid summary of the status of the problem, we must come to grips with him; for if Croce is right we have been wasting our time on a problem that is not a problem. The most that can be said for Croce is that he has professed a theory of art, which, if true, does not need to consider whether to use the ugly or not, when it is creating, or when
it is judging. Our search for a place for the ugly in fine art is a search for a canon which will serve both creator and observer, as a standard to guide both. Croce sees no need for a standard, beyond various intuitions; and from this intuition, intellect is barred. Of course, his opinion is purely experimental, as ours is also; yet I believe it safe to say that, granting for the sake of argument that music or painting may be purely impressionistic, without intellect, it is inconceivable that real drama, or architecture, or poetry, can be appreciated without contemplation, the use of intellect. On the other hand, even should Croce's theory of art be correct, the problem of the ugly in art would still exist, changing to "what place can the commonly ugly have in art in the moment of intuition?"

However, not to weaken our argument by such trivial observations, we see that Croce not only shocks the orthodox by challenging all they have ever done, and disregards the problems of a more plausible theory, but also exposes himself to ridicule. That no difference exists between the plodding student who is taking a course in medieval literature, and the master who wrote the great "Divine Comedy;" that the artist's face "glows with the divine joy of the Creator," equally over sentimental doggerel, such as Colly Cibber produced, and over the fire of Shelley; that each piece of art is universally appreciated, because it is "successful," be it jazz, or some stirring march, or some Chopin symphony; all these, and others he assumes, are positions bordering on the ridiculous. Then, too, that art merely adds a little imagination to ordinary intuition,
to become art, and that there is no distinction between form and content, or matter and significance, yet the latter comes first, and the former is merely the means of preserving it, seems inconsistent ideas. And can Croce say whence comes the desire, the impulse, to create? It is the same as the faculty of judgment; the sight of the piece of art stimulates this latter; does some external stimulus also produce the creative intuition? If so, what is it?

Although it is not fair to judge a philosophical system by its fruits, it is significant that the extremes to which Croce's doctrine permits one to go has led to the production of some miserable art in late years. I believe it is fair to blame him for much of our extreme subjectivism, and this subjectivism for such things as the poetry of Gertrude Stein. Let us consider this dilemma; if Croce is considering the art of the future, art as it should be, his position is weakened by the poor work he has inspired; and if he is basing his theory on art as it is, he certainly is far wrong, for the accepted works of fine art were certainly never produced by intuition alone.

But why continue the attack? Croce is the ultra-modern, yet in a sense a mystic, one whose basis is a moment of ecstasy. As for his place in our history, it will be interesting to note that, far as he is from Aristotle, in time and in aim of art, he is the only critic since the Greek to give unbridled place in art to what the ordinary person knows as ugliness.
PRESENT VIEWPOINT

Recent aesthetic, fresh from the wave of idealism of the last century, is now following the trend of philosophy, science, and art, and elevating realism to the highest place. We see things in a new light. We consider the ugly details of "American Tragedy" as very fine art. We have carried to the extreme the principle of Ruskin and Rosenkrantz, that the ugly is needed in order to portray the complete cross-section of life. A remark was recently made in a class to the effect that "what was formerly called ugly" is now used to sharpen observation, to add to the details necessary to the whole. So the present tendency, under the influence of Croce, and also of realism, and pushed about by various minor theories, forgets that there is such a thing as idealism in art, or that there is such a thing as ugliness, and proceeds to use whatever it wants to in art. The pendulum may swing back, probably will, in fact, to a dreary, yet satisfactory idealism; but right now this attitude is rased.

The chief and most representative contemporary aestheticians are Croce, whom we have already discussed, J.F. Carritt, and George Santayana. Carritt is a neo-Crocean, Santayana a critical realist. Santayana's doctrine is worthy of some special consideration. Beauty, judged either in art or in nature has, psychologically, three elements: first, material beauty, sensuous imagery, vital feelings and content; colors and sounds; second, formal beauty, arrangement of these sensuous elements in pleasing shapes and patterns; and third, expression, the quality achieved by objects by association, which gives them appeal for individuals. This is, however, merely a psychiol-
gical analysis; actually, the aesthetic feeling, which term has been used often enough to make its meaning clear, is not divided, but essentially one. The term "expression" here used by Santayana, is part of every aesthetic scheme; but the meaning varies so that it indicates no general tendency whatever.

I quote at some length from Santayana's view of our problem of ugliness in art. It is in keeping with the modern principles.

"Something analogous to humour may appear in plastic forms. When we call it the grotesque. This is an interesting effect produced by such a transformation of an ideal type as exaggerates one of its elements or combines it with other types. We call these inventions comic and grotesque when we are considering their divergence from the natural rather than their inward possibility. But the latter constitutes their real charm, and the more we study and develop them, the better we understand it. The incongruity with the conventional type then disappears, and what was impossible and ridiculous at first takes its place among recognized ideals. The centaur and satyr are no longer grotesque; the type is accepted. And the grotesqueness of an individual has essentially the same nature. If we like the inward harmony, the ugliness disappears." (1) What appears to be grotesque may be intrinsically superior or inferior to the normal. That is a question of its abstract material and form. The grotesque is the half-formed, the perplexed, the grotesquely monstrous." And finally, "Good wit

(1) See above, Aristotle, "The Ugly in Art."

(2) "Sense of Beauty." Para 64
is novel truth, as the good grotesque is novel beauty."

So ugliness is an external matter, and has a place in art which is essentially significant. Santayana, however, bars evil from aesthetic, and considers no aesthetic expression to be based on it. But what was once known as ugly is now considered perfectly harmless. As Katherine Gilbert says, "It is now taken as aesthetic innocence to apply the word "ugly" to the portraits of wrinkled old women, cacophony in poetry, discords in music, angularity in drawing, or roughness of dramatic utterance. If you extend the term "Beauty" beyond the mere easy agreeable, so that it will include everything that is in any sense aesthetically moving, how much territory so you leave to the ugly? The tendency is to say "nothing." Just as it is said regarding morality that "tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner," so it is said in the world of semblances that to take in any representation adequately involves giving it a positive worth."

(1) Ibid

(2) Studies in Recent Aesthetic. Pg 152
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have watched critical theory from Aristotle to the present, while it was undergoing a series of changes. Shall we call this process a development, or a progression, or a mere series of changes? If it is a development, the germ of what now stands accepted has been spun out by trial and error till it has reached its present high stage. If it is a progression, it has been going steadily toward a certain end, which is the perfect aesthetic theory. If it is a mere series of changes, it has shifted ground, but gotten nowhere.

It is not easy to decide just which name to give to what has happened in aesthetic. The closest, perhaps, is "development." For the general principle of artistic judgment has not been settled. One theory has grown out of another, but no one knows, or can say dogmatically, which is supreme. Yet it is not a mere stationary march. Certain minor points have been cleared up, and, if no theory has been established, some have been definitely exposed and eliminated; the field has narrowed down to a few general types, and a wall has been built, over which no heterodox ascends yet conceived is able to climb.

But let us be concrete. Our problem in this paper is that of the ugly in art. The two factors we have to deal with are ugliness and art. What has critical theory done with these, in two thousand years?

Plotinos was the first to try to analyze beauty and its converse ugliness. But, Plotinos does not mean much to us; he does not satisfy us. Beauty is to be sought in God, and is composed of divine elements; ugliness is that which is without it. But no one has ever analyzed the divine, and this gross
failure of mankind has made it impossible for us to benefit
much by Plotino's answer to our question, even if he had
written for the world, instead of his own mystic group; and
the value of his theory, to us at least, is purely historical.

Much later, Burke suggested that beauty was that which
causes love in us. It was a noble effort, but it missed by a
large margin. Burke had the wrong viewpoint, the wrong angle
of approach. Then, possibly because he realized that he had
not settled the question permanently, he tried again, this
time describing the beautiful instead of desiring it. He
observed beautiful objects, and tried to form canons by which
the beautiful might be identified; these canons were the rules
of swainess, smoothness, varied form, bright but not extrava-
gant color, and delicacy. But again, Burke failed. Beauty
is not of such a nature that it can be so simply identified.
It is something distinct, and appeals to us in a way that is
hard to define, indeed, beyond definition. This is the great
discovery made by Kant; and it has stood ever since. Kant
of course, is a master of fine distinctions, and this one in
particular is a great achievement. He insisted that beauty
was that which, apart from all its objective qualities, appeals
to our faculty of taste.

From Kant on, beauty changed its nature, from the point
of view of our analysis of it. Four more theories of beauty
have been suggested, since has time; each of them important
enough to keep in mind. Hegel said that beauty is that which
contains the Idea. Bosanquet, not quite satisfied with this
type of idealism, and impressed with the fact that beauty is
not absolute, calls it that which has individual expressiveness. Ruskin holds the fort for the conservatives, with the definition of beauty as "that which pleases us in the mere contemplation of it." Finally, Croce with that peculiar panacea-salesman attitude of his, states that beauty is simply successful expression of an intuition. His theory bounds beauty by no limits whatever; he is at the highest point of the evolution which breaks all bonds, tracing its way from Kant, through Hegel and Bosanquet, to Croce, with Ruskin representing a temporary retrogression.

But where is the ugly in all this? From the definitions of beauty it can be seen that the ugly is gradually fading. With Kant and Ruskin it was still the opposite of the physically beautiful; but with Bosanquet it began to assume the form of the false, the mediocre, in art. In Croce this position attained its summit; the ugly became the unsuccessful, and found itself containing what most people have hitherto called beautiful. Even now, the ugly as such is lost in the dust of our aesthetic progress, and the only expedient, seemingly, that is open to those who hate to see a grand old word die is to give it an altogether new meaning, that of bad art.

So it is with theories of art. The first is that rather cold,-blooded and pioneering principle of Aristotle; art is imitation, of the mind of the creator. The artist aims to imitate. Then came the first expressionist, Plotinos; he definitely challenges Aristotle on this point, advancing as his principle that the artist aims to come into contact with God; and the battle is on. Others join the mêlée, each differently
armed, and all proceed to cut each other's throats. Lessing's artist aims to produce beauty, the beauty we of the demos recognize. Hegel's wishes portray the Idea, the great significant truth of life. Goethe's and Bosanquet's aims at the significant; beauty is only a by-product. Ruskin's aims to teach a moral lesson. And now Croce aims at nothing; he takes his shot as his intuition guides him; and our moderns aim to portray things as they are, not as they are in the mind of the artist.

Where, now, is our progress? I believe it will be necessary for us to say that there has been no evident evolution. This, however, has happened, that each of the three types of mind has stated its case. The conservative is Lessing, who joins Rosenkranz to him; art aims at pure, unmixed beauty. The radical, the cynic, the libertine, is Aristotle supported by the moderns; there is no beauty for which art strives; its only aim is either staid, weak imitation of nature, or ungoverned "intuition" or expression of what is in the artist's mind. The strange part of this theory is that it is found at both ends of the historical development; it stands the test of time. The wise, middle-ground man, the moderate, the evaluating critic, is the idealist, in which category we place Hegel, Plotinus, Ruskin, Bosanquet, and the Hegelian school. These claim that art is neither bound to produce beauty nor free to produce what it wishes, but must give us touch with something beyond our ordinary world, something which we may call God, or the Idea, or Moral Truth, or the significant, but remains, by all its names, a recondite and intangible "some-
thing."

Ugliness fades out; art shifts ground; but ugliness in art remains a problem. It is not necessary to retrace this development historically; it is sufficient to prove where it stands in each theory of art. We must here insist upon the common definition of ugliness (for it is with this that our problem deals), that ugliness is the distorted, the nauseating, the repulsive, the anti-beautiful where the beautiful is, as Ruskin calls it, that which gives us pleasure in the mere contemplation of it; apart from any associations. The position of each school on this problem is now evident. The first, the Lessing conservative, go as far as they can in barring the ugly from art. They concede that it may be necessary, in some cases, to portray the ugly as a part of a "cross-section of life," but insist that it must be modified or softened sufficiently to keep it from marring the whole. The middle group, the idealists, allow the ugly a place in art if it expresses the idea, contains ideal significance. Within the limits of this "ideal significance" there is a wide variety of rules, which covers almost the entire gap between Lessing and the moderns. Aristotle, Croce, and the moderns allow what we once called ugly to come into art when and as it wishes, or the artist wishes it.

The ugly in art and literature; is it acceptable, or is it anathema? The ugliness of bad art, the only ugliness now conceded even to exist, is out of art, ipso facto. But old-style ugliness as we have defined it just above, is still a problem; and its solution depends primarily upon which theory of art we choose.
Let us choose by elimination. Plotinus' theory of art, while so broad that it includes features of all the others, is not an aesthetic, but a theory of religion. Ruskin's theory of morality in art is open to the same objection. Croce we have already discarded. This narrows the field to the three views mentioned before, represented generally by Lessing, Hegel, and Aristotle.

Of these, Lessing must resign first of all. His effort is a very noble one; but it lacks broadness. Lessing has made the mistake of applying the principles of one era of history to all times and places. Art aims, it is true, at beauty; but it is not limited to this. We now recognize pieces of art which Lessing would never have accepted.

Aristotle, it must be confessed, formulated a theory which had long life in its field, and still stands in some of its phases. The biggest element in the progress of artistic theory away from sheer beauty is the delight in the skill of the artist, as Aristotle intimated. But imitation, even expression of ideas (imitation of the mind of the artist) does not quite satisfy. Hegel has aptly said that no matter how well we imitate nature she is closer to herself than we are to her. And as for expression, we must exclude it because it allows no place for the high-grade artist, the genius; the expression of the small-souled would be as high as that of the great.

Only one position remains; it seems that we have nothing left but to align ourselves with Hegel, and pledge allegiance to a doctrine we cannot understand. Yet it seems inevitable. Modern iconoclasm has allowed no ancient altar to stand, it is

(1) Above "Croce, Remarks."
true. But modern iconoclasm is not established as absolute truth. Many of the fallen idols will be restored in the course of years. And one of them, I feel, is the old principle that art and beauty raise us out of the everyday world, if only for a minute, and give us a glimpse of something real, true, significant, ideal; that it makes us feel safer, closer to the "intangible something" we feel to exist. Of music and poetry, this is seen to be true. Of satire, it might be denied; but satire, if it does not show us the real, at least exposes the false. All art is of this nature.

But we have said that within the limits of idealism there is a sliding scale of ugliness. At which end of this do we place ourselves? Here we must bow to the advances of time. It repulses us to see anything really ugly in a prime position in art; yet there are types of ugliness which we cannot exclude. For the ugly may have power, it may be sublime; it may be horrifying; and in any of these capacities it may have ideal significance. Neither do we wish to soften it greatly; it must only be prevented from spoiling the work by its overbalancing repulsiveness.

How can we apply all this? Since our prime interest in literature, let us take a few examples from classical, remember, of course, that literature, because it can present a series of pictures, has more laxity in the matter of ugliness than painting.

Homer, as has been stated before, used the ugly in the character of Thersites; but he softened it somewhat, balanced it with good features. Aristophanes used a fat, cowardly,
drunken Bacchus in the comedy of "The Frogs," but this was a satire, and contained in it ridicule of the Greek gods.
Beowulf fought a battle with the fiend, Grendel, but Grendel was supernatural. In recent times, Milton portrayed the son of Satan at the gates of Hell, a horrible figure, and Bunyan had his Pilgrim fight with the terrible Apollyon; in both cases there is the supernatural. Swift draws an ugly yet highly artistic picture of Criticism in the "Battle of the Books." The ideal value of satire has been shown. Coleridge uses the ugly for atmosphere;

"A thousand thousand slimy things

Lived on—and so did I."

But the atmosphere he wanted to build was a part of a mystic scene. So it is with all uses of ugliness; they are parts of works of art which avoid the superficiality of the commonplace (though it may preach the "glory of the commonplace"), and give us a touch of what either is or seems to be an approach to truth and, everlasting significance.

So much for the ugly in art. It is hoped that this thesis traces the development of the modern viewpoint. It is too much to expect that it solves the problem. After all, the real standard is that taste of the individual. We can only review what has been said, and choose, each for himself, what seems closest to truth.